

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for the careful consideration given the present application and for indicating that claim 19 is allowable. The application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office action and amended as necessary to more clearly and particularly describe the subject matter which applicants regard as the invention.

Claims 1 and 11 have been amended.

Claim 11 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) and 102(e) as being anticipated by Hayakawa (WO 03/077604). Amended claim 11 recites in part, “wherein the steam delivery means includes a steam pipe and a steam duct, and further wherein the steam duct is located within the heating chamber and introduces the generated steam into the steam pipe.” Hayakawa fails to teach or suggest the claimed steam pipe. Hayakawa also fails to teach or suggest a steam duct located within the heating chamber, and which introduces the generated steam into the steam pipe. As can be seen in Fig. 7, Hayakawa teaches that steam S from an evaporating dish 35 is drawn into and pushed out of a circulating fan chamber 25 by a circulating fan 17. See Hayakawa at page 33, lines 5-18. The noted teachings of Hayakawa do not teach or suggest a steam duct located within a heating chamber for introducing generated steam into a steam pipe. For at least these reasons, claim 11 is allowable over Hayakawa.

Claim 1, 8, 9, 12-15, 20 and 21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Hayakawa in view of Yoneno et al. (U.S. patent number 5,525,782). Amended claim 1 recites in part, “a steam duct located within the heating chamber for introducing generated steam into the steam pipe.” Neither Hayakawa nor Yoneno teach or suggest *a steam duct located within the heating chamber* for introducing generated steam into a steam pipe. As

Appl. No.: 10/800,061  
Amdt. Dated: October 5, 2006  
Reply to Office action of: July 6, 2006

discussed above with respect to claim 11, Hayakawa fails to teach or suggest the noted limitations. Furthermore, as can be seen in Fig. 14, Yoneno teaches an oven cavity 2 and steam generator 40. However, Yoneno's oven cavity lacks a steam duct located therein for introducing generated steam into a steam pipe. For at least these reasons, claim 1 is allowable over the cited combination of references.

Claims 8, 9, 12-15, 20 and 21 depend from claim 1. For at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 1, claims 8, 9, 12-15 and 21 are allowable over Hayakawa in view of Yoneno.

Claims 3, 4, 6 and 7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Hayakawa in view of Yoneno and further in view of Kawada (JP 54-10460). Claims 3, 4, 6 and 7 depend from claim 1. For at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 1, claims 3, 4, 6 and 7 are allowable over the cited combination of references.

Claims 5, 10 and 16-18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Hayakawa in view of Yoneno and further in view of Kurita (U.S. patent number 6,232,587). Claims 5, 10 and 16-18 depend from claim 1. For at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 1, claims 5, 10 and 16-18 are allowable over the cited combination of references.

Claim 19 stands allowed.

In light of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance and notice to that effect is hereby requested. If it is determined that the application is not in a condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to initiate a telephone interview with the undersigned attorney to expedite prosecution of the present

Appl. No.: 10/800,061  
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application.

If there are any additional fees resulting from this communication, please charge same to our Deposit Account No. 16-0820, our Order No. 36549.

Respectfully submitted,

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